

FINDING FURTHER
INFORMATION ON ADV

Web Sites

www.ferret.org/aleutian.htm
www.ferretcentral.org
animalsforawareness.org/aleutian.htm
www.geocities.com/russiansmom
<http://www.ferretadv.com/index.htm>

ADV Testing Supplies

Avecon Diagnostics, Inc.
Telephone 800.249.5875
www.avecon.com

United Vaccines, Inc.
Telephone 800.283.6465

ADV Research

University of Georgia,
Dept of Small Animal Medicine
Attn: ADV Testing
220 Vet Med Building
Athens, GA 30602-7390



This is Pudge. She is a happy, healthy, ADV+ ferret. So pretty they made her into a stamp!


**A Non-Profit
Organization**

*If you have an ADV+ household, and
you are interested in possibly adopting,
fostering, or sponsoring an ADV+
shelter ferret, please contact us today!*

Local Contact:



**Metropolitan NY/
NJ Ferret Welfare
Society, Inc.**

33 Arrowhead Drive
Neshanic Station NJ 08853
Web: <http://www.metroferret.com>
E-mail : admin@metroferret.com
Federal 501©(3) Not-for-Profit Organization
Federal EIN 22-3684207
NJ Charities Registration: CH-1582700
NJ Tax Exempt ID 223-684-207/000
NY Charities Registration 20-21-82
NY Tax Exempt ID EX230833

*This brochure is provided in an effort to increase the awareness of
ADV, and is only a general overview . The document can be freely
distributed in it's original form, with your contact information added
in the space provided above. No other alterations are permitted.*


**SYMPTOMS OF
ALEUTIAN'S
DISEASE VIRUS**

*Observations of the Characteristics of ADV
Symptoms in ADV+ shelter ferrets, provided by:*

**Metropolitan NY/
NJ Ferret Welfare
Society, Inc.**



Metro Ferret
www.metroferret.com

SYMPTOMS OF ALEUTIAN'S DISEASE VIRUS (ADV)

If your ferret has tested positive for Aleutian's Disease, you may want to read this flyer. This information is compiled by observations of the progression of the disease from an ADV+ shelter, and information contained in various published texts. This information is provided to help the ADV+ Ferret owner deal with the illness, by knowing what to expect. It is not meant to replace the advice or care of an experienced veterinarian.

Stages of ADV

Antibody Stage: Any of a large variety of immunoglobulins normally present in the body, or produced in response to an antigen, which it neutralizes, thus producing an immune response. When a ferret has contracted ADV, they may begin in the Antibody stage. They may not show any symptoms of the disease at all, as their bodies are fighting the infection.

Antigen Stage: The antigen-antibody reaction stage occurs when excessive antibody production without neutralization of the virus* occurs. The ferret has lost its ability to fight the disease, but the immune system continues to try to fight the infection. Ferrets infected during birth or as kits often reach this stage very quickly. It is at this stage that the advanced symptoms of the disease will occur.

General Information

ADV Positive Ferrets: If you have only one or several ferrets that test positive for ADV, you must consider all of your ferrets exposed, and therefore, positive, even if others did not test positive. Separating ferrets after one has been diagnosed will have no positive affect on the animals. If the ferrets are bonded, and then separated, the progression of the ADV may be more pronounced, as the ferrets suffer separation distress and depression. Because one ferret is infected, it is not a guarantee that the ferret's companions will be infected. Transmission of the disease is still a bit of a mystery.

Vaccinations: It is recommended that you do not test a ferret for ADV for at least 6-8 weeks after it has been vaccinated. The vaccination may cause a false positive in testing. This being the case, it is logical to test your ferrets for ADV before they go for their annual vaccinations. If your ferret is ADV+, distemper and rabies may not be recommended, as the vaccines could exacerbate the infection, and cause the disease to advance. There is some debate on this, though, so talk to you vet about it. If the ferret is positive, it should not be interacting with other people's animals, or attending shows, so the risk of contracting distemper should be relatively low.

Observations

Teeth: Teeth and gums may bleed in the ADV+ Ferret. These should be watched closely for signs of infection. If excessive swelling occurs, bring the ferret to the vet for examination and antibiotics when needed.

Nails: When a ferret is in the Antibody stage, its system is building up proteins, and may cause the nails to grow at a faster rate than normal.

Fur: Also due to the protein build up, ADV+ Ferrets may develop a thick, luxurious coat. Your ferret will look marvelous. The skin will also appear very healthy.

Eyes: It has been observed that a number of ADV+ Ferrets have watery eyes. This does not occur in every case, though.

Coughing: ADV+ Ferrets may develop a dry, hacking cough, similar to the cough of a hairball. Laxatone will not correct the cough. The cough usually appears in conjunction with the coat change.

Disease Progression

It has been observed that ferrets diagnosed with ADV as kits usually have a much shorter life span, as compared to those ferrets that contracted the disease, and are diagnosed at a later age. Ferrets have been known to live just as long with ADV as without. As the disease progresses, the following symptoms may occur:

Hind leg weakness/paralysis: Ferrets seem to manage quite well with this. Symptoms include non-use of the back legs, and appearance of degeneration of the spine.

Excessive Urination: As the disease progresses, the kidneys begin to fail, and the ferret will begin urinating much more than usual. More frequent box changes will be needed.

Ulcerations of the Intestines: The disease may cause a wasting of the intestinal tissue, which may result in perforations. The food cannot be digested, and may escape into the abdominal cavity.

Pneumonia: One of the major causes of death in ADV+ Ferrets. Antibiotics may help, and the ferret should be taken to the vet.

Kidney Failure: Another major cause of death in ADV+ Ferrets. While massive sub-q fluids may help this, the progression will continue..

Veterinary Care: If your ferret is diagnosed as ADV+, you should inform your vet immediately, and ask him to research the treatments available for the various symptoms. Any severe symptoms will require you to take the ferret to the vet. Remember to discuss vaccinations and ADV with your vet before hand. Of course, an ADV positive ferret is susceptible to all of the other diseases that commonly occur in ferrets. Keep an eye out for Adrenal Disease, Lymphoma, Insulinoma, just as you would for any other ferret.

ADV Research: Several organizations are currently conducting research to develop a vaccination for ADV. A cure does not seem likely, and prevention may be the key. The organizations may accept donations of samples of urine, feces and specimens, or monetary donations, which are always appreciated. For contact information on research, please see the back of this flyer.

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*Also referenced in writing this flyer is the Compendium on Continuing Education for the Practicing Veterinarian., Vol 23, No 2, February 2001, pages 178-183: Aleutian Mink Disease Parvovirus: Implications for Companion Ferrets.